
Report to the Protocol Committee – Draft Webcasting Protocol

A webcast is a media presentation distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology to distribute a single content source to many simultaneous listeners/viewers. A webcast may either be distributed live or on demand. Essentially, webcasting is "broadcasting" over the Internet. Live information from the Council meeting is captured and sent via our provider Public-I and is available to anyone with an appropriate internet connection. Archived meetings are automatically indexed by agenda item and speaker, which allows viewers to watch just those specific items in which they are interested. The Archive of meetings is available online going back for a period of 12 months. Meetings from beyond the 12 month period are available on request from the Chief Executive's Office.

The principal reason for webcasting is that it will increase accessibility, openness and transparency. By approving live broadcast of Council meetings, the Members should be aware that:

- All of the Meeting will be on the public record. Council discussions and decisions made can be viewed in real time by a wide audience.
- Conduct at meetings will continue to be subject to Standing Orders and to the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).
- A Webcast of Council meetings is also governed by the Freedom of Information Act 2014, the Data Protection Act 1988 and 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 and the Defamation Act 2009.
- Dublin City Council is the Publisher of the Archived Webcast.
- While the Webcast of the Council Meetings will be conducted in real time, the Webcast itself will not constitute the Minutes of the Meeting. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2001 (as Amended) and the Council's Standing Orders, the Minutes of the proceedings of the Council will be drawn up by the Meetings Administrator following each meeting and when confirmed as an accurate record at the following Council Meeting these Minutes shall be deemed to be the confirmed Minutes of such Meeting.

Attached is a draft Protocol for Webcasting of City Council meetings, which account of existing legislation. The protocol is to assist the conduct of webcast meetings and to ensure that Councillors are compliant with their obligations under the relevant legislation.

The approval of the Council to the continuance of Webcasting of City Council meetings and the adoption of the draft Protocol for Webcasting is requested.

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL.

NOVEMBER 2019

PROTOCOL FOR WEBCASTING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. Background Information

In line with E-Government Strategy, one of the key commitments of Dublin City Council has been to improve openness and accountability in how it interacts with the citizens of the City. The goal had been to improve communication of Council deliberations to the public and to encourage Public interest in Local Government. To this end it was agreed by the Council to webcast the monthly City Council meetings live to the Internet. This has opened up the work of the Council to a wider audience thus improving the transparency of decision making.

This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of webcast meetings and to ensure that in doing so the Councillors are compliant with their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, the Data Protection Act 1988 and 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 and the Defamation Act 2009. Accordingly, the following will apply to all meetings to be webcast by the City Council.

2. Termination or suspension of live webcast

- 1) The Lord Mayor has the discretion to request the termination or suspension of the webcast if in the opinion of the Chair continuing to webcast would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.
- 2) Termination or Suspension of the Webcast could include:
 - Public disturbance or any other reasons the Chair deems appropriate and reasonable;
 - Exclusion of public and press being moved and supported;
 - Any other reason moved, seconded and supported by the Council.

3. Complaints Procedure

- 1) If a member of the public or an elected Member wishes to lodge a complaint regarding a webcast they should contact the City Council official with responsibility for the administration of the Committee in question.
- 2) The webcast will be temporarily removed while the complaint is reviewed.
- 3) The Chair of the Committee and named participant will be informed of the complaint.

- 4) The City Council will seek all legal and other advice to determine the validity of the complaint.
- 5) Depending on the outcome of the investigation the webcast will be republished in full or redacted in part to remove the offending material.

4. Archived Webcasts

- 1) Dublin City Council is the Publisher of the Archived Webcast.
- 2) Council meetings are recorded as they are streamed live on the internet. These recordings will make up an archive. All archived webcasts will be available to view on the Council's website for a period of one year subject to paragraph 3. The Chief Executives Department maintains an archive of historical webcasts which can be accessed on request.
- 3) Archived webcasts shall only be removed or suspended from the website if it is considered that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision, for example the Freedom of Information Act 2014, the Data Protection Act 1988 and 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 and the Defamation Act 2009.
- 4) Archived webcasts shall only be redacted if the Chief Executive of the Council has justifiable grounds to redact the webcast.
- 5) The Council expects the Lord Mayor and the Chief Executive to ensure that Council meetings are conducted lawfully. Therefore, it is anticipated that the need to exercise the power set out above will only occur in exceptional situations.
- 6) Any Member who is concerned about any webcast should raise their concerns with the Chief Executive or her/his staff.

5. Agenda Front Sheets and Signage at Meetings

On the front of each agenda and on signs to be displayed inside the meeting room there will be the following notification:

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

You should be aware that the Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014, the Data Protection Act 1988 and 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 and the Defamation Act 2009. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the legislation.

Therefore, by entering the Council Chamber and using the seats around the meeting tables, public gallery etc., you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Chief Executives Department on Extn. 2101 or DD (01) 222 2100.

6. Code of Conduct:

During debate, members need to be continually mindful of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and Standing Orders which requires you to:

- Recognize the special position of the Lord Mayor as first citizen of the City;
- Conduct your business in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

7. Conduct of meetings

A written notice will be placed in the Council Chamber stating that the meeting is being webcast, and that the Lord Mayor may also terminate or suspend the webcasting of the meeting, in accordance with this Protocol. This will be confirmed by the Lord Mayor making the following statement:-

“I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet and will be capable of repeated viewing.”

Guest speakers, presenters and consultants when invited to speak at a Council meeting to be advised of the Council’s Protocol.